Belgian chocolate pioneer Pierre Draps (92) has passed away

MARCH 18, 2012 AT 12:00 AM | KristofSimoens

In the Swiss Ascona, one of the last Belgian chocolate pioneers has passed away. Pierre Draps junior, together with his brothers Joseph and François, was at the cradle of luxury brand Godiva. 'I was born in chocolate and lived a beautiful dream', is the obituary of the chocolate master.

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Pierre Draps Jr. was only 19 when he lost his father, barely four months after his mother died. Father Pierre had started making pralines in 1926, which were sold in the Sarma, among other places. At the age of ten, junior learned the trade from his father and his older brother Joseph. When their father died in February 1938, the three brothers decided to continue the workshop on the ground floor of the parental home in Molenbeek.

At the end of 1945, the brand name 'Godiva' first appeared. An idea from Pierre's sister-in-law Gabrielle. She came up with the British legend of Lady Godiva, who galloped naked on horseback through the city centre of Coventry to force her husband Léofric, the Count of Mercy, to reduce taxes on the population.

Shortly afterwards, the brothers opened their first shop in Koekelberg, in the house of a top banker friend. A success, and less than six months later a second shop followed in Knokke. 'It often happened that we came back to Brussels late at night, made pralines all night long and took the train in the morning with our pralines and truffles with *buttercream* . When we arrived, there were already twenty people waiting for us.' **New York** In 1958, Godiva already had twenty stores in Belgium, opened its first store in Paris and let the whole world taste its chocolate specialities during the Expo in Brussels. In 1965, King Baudouin appointed Pierre Draps Knight in the Order of Leopold II. In 1972, Godiva started its conquest of America with its first store in New York. 'Who would have thought that we would see this with our own eyes?', a very proud Pierre confided to his brother Joseph at the official opening. That same year, the brothers sold Godiva to the American food group Campbell's. Almost thirty years ago, Pierre Draps moved to Switzerland. Every now and then he still made pralines himself: 'If a friend asks me, I can't say *no* .' His last public appearance was in early February, when he was visited by the top of the Turkish Yildiz Holding, the group that bought Godiva from Campbell's in 2007. 'You could still see that sparkle in his eyes

when he talked about chocolate,' chairman Murat Ülker said afterwards about that meeting. 'You are a man after my own heart. My Godiva is in good hands,' the 92-year-old Draps had whispered to him at the end of that visit.

COMMENTARY

How Open VLD lost 'freedom' to illiberal right

The battle for the carcass of Open VLD is getting underway. The land consolidation on the right could be exciting...

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COMMENTARY

Anyone else hear about the woke threat?

It is almost impossible to keep track of all the major political decisions that are now suddenly possible...

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REVIEW

Vincent Stuer writes a political thriller about the royal question: Leopold III cried with a beautiful woman. That also became his downfall

Despite the known outcome, Vincent Stuer wrote a political thriller about the royal drama. ...

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UPSIDE DOWN

Back to the future, with Pieter De Crem

If Tom Naegels were the 29,000 inhabitants of Aalter, he would collectively sink through the ground in shame. ...

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THE OPINION

Try to hear the silence, it sounds different every time

We need to listen to the world around us and realize that we are listening along with so many other...

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Domestic

Today at 21:35 US delegation visits Greenland this week - Those who are often temporarily unemployed will soon feel it in their retirem...
(/cnt/dmf20250324_91751360)

Today at 7:00 PM UZA to screen smokers for lung cancer: “We have to be honest: that smoke-free generation will not come immediately”
(/cnt/dmf20250323_96667945)

Today at 7:00 PM A child with a disability requires a lot of care, fathers also help. “A child is a major stress factor in a relationship. A chi...
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Today at 7:00 PM Those who are often temporarily unemployed will feel it in their pension. “These people are being punished, while th...
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97939676)

Today at 7:00 PM Rector Luc Sels on Trump's interventions at Columbia: "I'm surprised how quiet it remains. Self-censorship is taking ...
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97564431)

Today at 12:21 Major forest fire on Belgian-Dutch border completely extinguished
(/cnt/dmf20250323_95460042)

Today at 06:54 Lawyer of driver after head-on collision that killed four people: “He no longer knows what happened”
(/cnt/dmf20250323_95008641)

Today at 05:59 Hundreds of citizens protest against the lack of a Brussels government
(/cnt/dmf20250323_94790286)

Today at 05:50 Why the smallest railway union is striking for a week: “One or two days, that is not serious. The government has cheated...
(/cnt/dmf20250323_94545764)

Today at 04:01 Investigating judge arrests 25-year-old woman from Steenokkerzeel on suspicion of child murder
(/cnt/dmf20250322_93663995)

Today at 03:00 Prisoner tries to strangle guard in Andenne
(/cnt/dmf20250323_93651340)

Today at 01:12 Demir changes quotas: fewer specialists, more general practitioners on the way (from 2028)
(/cnt/dmf20250323_92987588)

Today at 00:07 Record number of complaints about food safety, half of them are justified
(/cnt/dmf20250323_92630696)

Abroad

Today at 21:17 Live America | White House: US delegation visits Greenland this week
(/cnt/dmf20240502_96110423)

Today at 7:00 PM The death toll in Gaza stands at 50,000 victims. And that is the most conservative estimate
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97966284)

Today at 7:00 PM Netanyahu heads for major clash with attorney general's resignation
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97725224)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ “Trump threatens to deliver Latin America to China on a silver platter”
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97305231)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ Running up war debts costs a country dearly, as the British have long known
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97598481)

Today at 13:40 Live Middle East | Israel attacks hospital in Khan Younis: “At least two dead”
(/cnt/dmf20240413_94226992)

Today at 13:38 Official arrest sidelines Erdogan's archrival Ekrem Imamoglu
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97433741)

Today at 13:02 Middle East Department Under Supervision: Columbia University Bows to Trump's Demands
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97324308)

Today at 12:33 MMA fighter Conor McGregor wants to become president of Ireland
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97040778)

Today at 10:57 Canadian PM announces early elections, asks for 'strong mandate to resist Trump'
(/cnt/dmf20250323_96465245)

Today at 10:04 Ex-Philippine President Now Receives “Perfectly Cooked Rice” in Prison After Complaints
(/cnt/dmf20250323_96147044)

Today at 08:32 Live Ukraine | Prime Minister De Wever invited to summit on Ukraine
(/cnt/dmf20231113_92216398)

Today at 07:32 Istanbul Mayor, Erdogan Opponent, Arrested and Removed from Office
(/cnt/dmf20250323_92302930)

Today at 07:28 ⊞ Trump envoy Witkoff calls European plan for peacekeepers in Ukraine 'simplistic', parrots Kremlin
(/cnt/dmf20250323_95207601)

Today at 04:22 Pope Francis makes first public appearance in five weeks, cleared to leave hospital
(/cnt/dmf20250322_94656693)

Today at 02:51 Police chase ends in spectacular pile-up in Paris
(/cnt/dmf20250323_93657626)

Culture and media

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ 'Père La Chaise', the man who sold counterfeit furniture to Versailles, goes to trial
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97166925)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ Wouter Deprez wonders what our teenage sons are looking for in the manosphere
(/cnt/dmf20250323_96740252)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ When the neighbors suddenly started cutting down the trees in their garden, I started to suffer from 'blossom sadness'
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97321497)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ They made a dull fashion brand culturally relevant again. Can they repeat the trick?
(/cnt/dmf20250323_96070331)

Today at 7:00 PM Bad news creates fear: what is the media's responsibility?
(/cnt/dmf20250321_95503248)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ Villa next to Auschwitz from 'The Zone of Interest' soon open to the public: “The fight against extremism is everyone's...
(/cnt/dmf20250323_98242855)

Today at 7:00 PM Are you a teacher? 'Boon voor Onderwijs' brings literature to your classroom
(/cnt/dmf20250321_92821237)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ Annette Herfkens was the only survivor of a plane crash: “Returning home empty-handed was the biggest trauma”
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97480115)

Today at 13:32 ⊞ 'The Mole' remains a masterclass in group dynamics, even after 12 seasons
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97199947)

Today at 03:20 Tiles fall from MAS during storm, Antwerp files lawsuit
(/cnt/dmf20250323_93748978)

Today at 02:09 Ark Prize 2025 goes to Ramsey Nasr
(/cnt/dmf20250323_93329640)

Yesterday at 23:42 ⊞ American TV star Oprah Winfrey on a 'state visit' to our country today: “She doesn't do it for the money”
(/cnt/dmf20250323_92477388)

Business

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ Chemical company Bayer receives another multi-billion dollar fine in Roundup case
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97696529)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ Defense industry offers troubled auto factories a way out
(/cnt/dmf20250323_96707794)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ “In the past, you needed a human researcher for a targeted market interview, now AI can do that”
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97117139)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ Are American fighter jets a good idea? Trump himself fuels doubts with his statements
(/cnt/dmf20250323_98008593)

Opinions

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ How Open VLD lost 'freedom' to illiberal right
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97997097)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ Who is helping alleged Belgian 'spy' Joseph Figuera?
(/cnt/dmf20250323_96246291)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ The difference between Flemish and English schools is immense
(/cnt/dmf20250323_96249411)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ Syria's future need not be sectarian
(/cnt/dmf20250323_96253010)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ Are there too few passengers? Or too few buses?
(/cnt/dmf20250323_95942113)

Yesterday at 23:53 Lectrr, cartoon of the day
(/cnt/dmf20250301_92033892)

Sport

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ Red Bull and Max Verstappen are already facing crisis talks after just two races
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97283358)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ Eliott Crestan settles comfortably in the world top in the 800m after World Cup silver: “And now I'm going skiing”
(/cnt/dmf20250323_98003298)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ How Mathieu van der Poel clipped Tadej Pogacar's wings
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97372673)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ Master servant Kopecky guides Wiebes to glory on the Via Roma: “It would have been stupid to do it differently”
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97562701)

Today at 7:00 PM ⊞ Farewell to George Foreman also means farewell to the golden years of boxing
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97313093)

Today at 14:47 Red Devils are a team again after a strong comeback victory with 3-0 win against Ukraine
(/cnt/dmf20250323_97859171)

Today at 12:12 Matz Sels replaces Thibaut Courtois in goal for the Red Devils against Ukraine
(/cnt/dmf20250323_96933190)

Today at 06:02 Eliott Crestan crowned vice world champion in 800 meters at World Indoor Championships
(/cnt/dmf20250323_94700910)

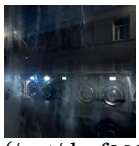
Today at 02:09 Piastri (McLaren) wins in Shanghai, teammate Lando Norris remains World Championship leader (/cnt/dmf20250323_93297679)

Not to be missed

Is there a scratch on the record? Vinyl sales fall for the first time since 2014

For the first time since 2014, the vinyl market in Belgium has shrunk, by 6.5 percent. Yet, fears ...

(/cnt/dmf20250316_95911564)



Solving a murder? Why not ask criminals, thought the Brussels police

To solve a murder in the drug world, several officers in the Brussels police zone called in...

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ANALYSIS

The promised mountains of gold collide with reality in Ninove: “Unfortunately I have to use the same excuse as your board used to”

Apart from some symbolic politics and muscle flexing regarding safety, Forza Ninove came the first 100 ...

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INTERVIEW

Valerie Van Peel, almost chair of the N-VA: “I am not Bart, and that is not necessary. I find power a difficult word”

Valerie Van Peel had lost her faith in politics. Now she returns through the big gate and ...

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HIT & RUN

Evelien Van Hamme from 'Thuis': “I don't always manage to be kind to myself”

Evelien Van Hamme plays Anna Greveling in Thuis . From 19/3 to 6/4 ...

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HOW DO THEY DO IT?

Michèle lost her husband two years ago: “Grieving is a process that takes time and energy”

Michèle De Coster lost her husband Peter to cancer two years ago. Together with her children ...

(/cnt/dmf20250312_95612223)

More?

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